

6 Pre-Reading Skills Booklists

Most picture books can be used to demonstrate one or more of the six skills, but here are a few proven favorites.

Print Motivation: Being interested in and enjoying books.

For Pre-Talkers (0-2 years):

Peek-a-Moo! by Maria Torres Cimarusti
Can You Choo-Choo? by David Wojtowycz
You and Me, Baby by Lynn Reiser
Piggies by Audrey Wood
Counting Kisses by Karen Katz

For Talkers (2-3 years):

Book by Kristine O'Connell George
Bark George, Jules Feiffer
Dig Dig Digging by Margaret Mayo
Cowboy Baby by Sue Heap
Silly Little Goose by Nancy Tafuri

For Pre-Readers (4-5 years):

Mud by Mary Lyn Ray
The Wide-Mouthed Frog, Keith Faulkner
Where's My Teddy? by Jez Alborough
Leonardo the Terrible Monster by Mo Willems
A Hat for Minerva Louise by Janet Morgan Stoeke

Vocabulary: Knowing the name of things.

For Pre-Talkers (0-2 years):

Whose Feet? by Jeanette Rowe
Toes, Ears and Nose by Marion Dane Bauer
Hands Can by Cheryl Willis Hudson
Wake Up, Me by Marni McGee
Here Are My Hands by Bill Martin

For Talkers (2-3 years):

What We Do by Reg Cartwright
Dinosaur Roar by Paul & Henrietta Stickland
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin
Napping House by Audrey Wood
Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert

For Pre-Readers (4-5 years):

Duck in the Truck, Jez Alborough
Mice and Beans, Pam Muñoz Ryan
Thesaurus Rex by Laya Steinberg
Sammy and the Dinosaurs by Ian Whybrow
Fancy Nancy by Jane O'Connor

Print Awareness: Noticing print, knowing how to handle a book and knowing how to follow the words on a page.

For Pre-Talkers (0-2 years):

Black on White by Tana Hoban (for newborns)
Look Look! by Peter Linenthal (for newborns)

Baby Faces by Margaret Miller
I Went Walking by Sue Williams
I Kissed the Baby by Mary Murphy

For Talkers (2-3 years):

The Deep Blue Sea: A Book of Colors by Audrey Wood
Does a Cow Say Boo? by Judy Hindley
Dilly Duck by Clare Freedman
Ten Little Eggs by Jean Marzollo
In the Tall Tall Grass by Denise Fleming

For Pre-Readers (4-5 years):

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus, Mo Willems
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, Laura Joffe Numeroff
In the Driver's Seat by Max Haynes
Russell the Sheep by Rob Scotten
Steal Back the Mona Lisa by Meghan McCarthy

Narrative Skills: Being able to describe things and events and tell stories.

For Pre-Talkers (0-2 years):

The Little Red Hen by Byron Barton
Ten in the Den by John Butler
Here a Chick, Where a Chick? by Suse MacDonald
Hug by Jez Alborough
Go Away Big Green Monster by Ed Emberley

For Talkers (2-3 years):

My Friend Rabbit by Eric Rohmann
Mr. Cookie Baker by Monica Wellington
Jump Frog Jump by Robert Kalan
Chickens to the Rescue by John Himmelman
Come Along Daisy by Jane Simmons

For Pre-Readers (4-5 years):

Wait! I Want to Tell You a Story by Tom Willans
Duck on a Bike by David Shannon
Once Upon a Banana by Jennifer Armstrong
The Hungry Hen by Richard Waring
Book! Book! Book! by Deborah Bruss

Letter Knowledge: Knowing letters are different from each other, knowing their names and sounds and recognizing letters everywhere.

For Pre-Talkers (0-2 years):

So Many Circles, So Many Squares by Tana Hoban
Color Farm by Lois Ehlert
Brown Rabbit's Shape Book by Alan Baker
A You're Adorable by Sidney Lippman
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin

For Talkers (2-3 years):

Alphabet Rescue by Audrey Wood
Eating the Alphabet, Lois Ehlert

ABC by William Wegman

A is for Amos by Deborah Chandra

The Bouncing, Dancing, Galloping ABC by Charlotte Doyle

For Pre-Readers (4-5 years):

Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth

Max's ABC by Rosemary Wells

B is for Bulldozer by June Sobel

Alphabet City by Stephen T. Johnson

Alpha Oops! by Alethea Kontis

Phonological Awareness: Being able to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

For Pre-Talkers (0-2 years):

Do Monkeys Tweet by Melanie Walsh

The Movable Mother Goose by Robert Sabuda

Boom, Baby, Boom Boom by Margaret Mahy

Moo, Baa, La La La by Sandra Boynton

My Very First Mother Goose by Rosemary Wells

For Talkers (2-3 years):

Yip! Snap! Yap! by Charles Fuge

Go, Dog, Go! by P.D. Eastman

Silly Sally by Audrey Wood

Tugger-Tugger Tugboat by Kevin Lewis

Sleepyhead Bear by Lisa Westberg Peters

For Pre-Readers (4-5 years):

Chimp and Zee by Catherine and Laurence Anholt

Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin

Is Your Mama a Llama? by Deborah Guarino

Falling for Rapunzel by Leah Wilcox

Llama Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney